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## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Note: The editor is not responsible for opinions expressed in this department. All communications must be accompanied by the name and address of the writer.

### THE SIGNING OF THE ARMISTICE

Dear Editor: *Fini la Guerre!* It was ten o'clock in the morning, Monday, November 11, 1918. I was down on the main street when the news was wired into the Hotel de Ville. A woman came out and running from one little shop to another, called out, "Signe! Signe!" (It is signed.) In a moment the streets were filled with happy excited people and flags appeared as if by magic. The "Grand Gallerie Modern" made a fortune selling cotton and paper flags at twenty times their value. By one o'clock the entire town was decorated. The church bells rang for half an hour and damp fire crackers popped and hissed. There were no brass bands and no excited shouting,—it was a French celebration. But the strange part of it was that it seemed to be for us, if not of us. There were as many American flags as French ones, and more cries of "Vive l'America" than "Vive la France!" Our little Camp Hospital 42 is situated at the edge of the town, and it is about all there is left here just now, of the Americans. There are only two nurses here and it seemed to be up to us to receive all the honors for our country. Such a procession of flowers and fruit and flags and happy congratulations as greeted us all afternoon! The women from the fur tannery came, singing the Marseillaise, and carrying flags, the Stars and Stripes at the head of the procession. Our washerwoman brought a basket of lettuce and a bouquet. A little old woman who has a garden across the road, came trudging over, carrying a big chrysanthemum plant. Another brought a basket of Brussels sprouts and an armful of chrysanthemums. Then I was called to the office and a very charming French lady, accompanied by three young girls whom I had never seen, presented me with a gorgeous bouquet tied with French and American ribbon. It was all so overwhelming and unexpected! At four o'clock in the afternoon I heard the Marseillaise, played rather feebly on an old French horn. I picked up my little French flag and went out to see what was coming next. Down the road from the little village behind the poplar trees, a mile away, came a most picturesque little procession. It was headed by a very old man with red whiskers, baggy trousers, hobbling along on a wooden leg, and playing the French horn. He was a veteran of the Franco-Prussian war, and had lost his leg in the first Battle of the Marne, in 1914. Next came a little boy, carrying a battered French flag, then half a dozen women, still wearing their kitchen aprons! The sunshine, struggling through the mist and clouds, lit up the happy little company. At night there is once more a light in the village streets, the long low boom of far distant cannon is hushed, and soon there will be no more Red Cross trains moving slowly over the rails, carrying their cargo of suffering men from the front. We miss the bands of music, and we want to hear the Star Spangled Banner, but the village band has done its work long since at the front and these French people do certainly appreciate the big part our boys have had in the victory. Already we are looking forward to the happy day when it shall be our turn to come home.

France

F. B.

### A VISIT TO BOCHE-LAND

Dear Editor: Through the courtesy of Lieutenant Anderson of the 12th Engineers, invitations were extended to several nurses from Evacuation Hospital No. 2 to visit the German trenches. On the morning of November 23, a party of

seven nurses and nine men left by motor truck and drove twenty-two miles before reaching the third line French trench. Then we prepared to march through to the first line trench. It seemed as if we walked for miles through dug-outs and over miniature bridges. Every one in our party thought the construction and camouflage of these trenches marvelous. At last we reached the front line. Our next objective was No Man's Land, then the German trenches. But, there before us lay three miles of solid net barbed wire entanglement. How were we to get across? But as American nurses our courage did not fail us, and over the top we went and made our objective, Boche-Land. One surprise after another met us in regard to the construction of these trenches. We had marveled at the French, but the German trenches are more wonderful, with concrete walls and floors, well kept after four years of fighting. The officers' dug-outs resembled palaces underground with all the conveniences of modern life. The kitchens were well stocked with potatoes, beans, carrots and tomatoes, also plenty of fuel put away for the coming winter. The tomatoes looked so good, I ate some of them, not thinking that the food stuffs might be poisoned. The Germans left all their equipment intact and did not destroy anything. All was clean and in good order. The camouflage was carried out to perfection, the walls of the buildings being covered with moss and ferns in order that they might resemble a mound or small hill-top. The roads were screened with hemp strung on wires which from a distance, looked like stretches of hemp growing in a field. No one would ever dream that there was a road leading to the first line trench for the purpose of conveying troops and supplies. We spent the entire day exploring but did not see half. To the right of us, beyond the German trenches, lay a beautiful valley with stately trees and winding woodland paths, no suggestion of rapine or bloodshed. To the left lay No Man's Land, absolute destruction, every tree shot down or torn to shreds. It seemed as though we could see the shades of the fallen soldiers come forth and cry out for revenge. We were happy to know that we were the first American nurses granted this privilege of entering the German trenches.

France

E. Q.

#### A STATE ASSOCIATION SURPRISES US

Dear Editor: As an Association, we wish to extend to yourself and staff our appreciation for the splendid work you have accomplished on the JOURNAL. During the war period we know there must have been times when the work was hard owing to strikes among printers, shortage of materials, and the illness of yourself and members of your staff. The JOURNAL has meant much to us at home; and to the nurses in the camps and overseas, it has been like the visit of a friend.

LUCY LAST,

Secretary Illinois State Association.